

Correspondence.

TOO MANY DENTISTS?

To the Editor of DOMINION DENTAL JOURNAL:

SIR,—I think you struck the nail on the head when, referring to the fact that over one hundred and fifty new candidates for licenses to practice in Ontario are in the college, you remarked that there are already more dentists in Ontario than can make a decent living. When we see well-educated men calling themselves professional men publicly advertising to make a set of teeth cheaper than a pair of boots; when we see the departmental stores able to get licentiates of Ontario to demean themselves by joining in the competition with the barbers, butchers, etc., and filling teeth for forty cents a filling; when we see the few getting fair fees, and the very many getting fees for which it is impossible to honestly serve their patients, there can be no question that Toronto—as all Ontario will have!—has too many dentists. When we compare the cost of living and the cost of materials to-day, and the great accession to our implements and appliances, with what they were twelve years ago, it needs very little knowledge of arithmetic to compute the inevitable result to the practitioner. If this is to be the result of our education, there is something wrong, and while I do not see how the college could be closed, as some have suggested for a few years, I see no reason why the matriculation should not be raised, the fees and the time increased. Those who feared that the Patrons of Industry would force free trade in dentistry, have now got pretty good proof that even in the more important matters which concern themselves they have not, and cannot get, power in the province, and if they are not able, with all their wits and wisdom, to help themselves, they can never have the influence to do harm to the profession. I know that you have always maintained the importance of education; and I recognize too the worth of the work of our teachers, but one of two results must surely follow: either the profession will be so much more overcrowded that it will degenerate into a trade with trade methods and trade customs, or a good proportion of those who are educated, finding no scope in Canada, will be lost to us as citizens. Neither of these results are desirable, and I doubt if the most partizan Patron would wish either of these results to occur. Why cannot a limit be made as to the number of students to be received each session?

Yours,

ONTARIO.